(b) whether Government have received any information from the Voluntary Health Association of India or any other Non-Governmental Organisations in Rajasthan and if so, details thereof and action taken thereon;

(c) whether any Central Team has been sent to investigate into the matter and assess damages caused and also stop such dangerous and hazardous operation; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) There are two units around Udaipur which manufacture H-acid for exports. The effluent from the manufacture of H-acid carries with it large quantities of organic pollutants which can affect the vegetation.

(b) to (d) A report was submitted to the Ministry of Health by the Voluntary Health Association of India, a copy of which was endorsed to this Ministry also. The report states that there has been damage to agricultural production, ground water pollution and cattle deaths. The Central Groundwater Board is also carrying out monitoring of groundwater in this region. The Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board has assessed the situation and has stated that the effluent from the manufacture of H-Acid should not be discharged outside the plant. It has requested the State Government to issue directions under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, for closure of M/s. Silver Chemicals, one of the manufeature of H-Acid. The Board is to reject the consent application of M/s. Jyoti Chemicals, the other manufacturer.

Compensation Claims of Indian Properties left in Bangladesh

983. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the total number of claims of compensation for Indian owned properties left in Bangladesh which remain to be settled as against the total claims submitted to the Custodian of Enemy Property for India between 1971 and 1977;

(b) how many of the processed claims have so far been paid to the claimants stating the reasons for the non-payment of the claims to the remaining claimants; and

(c) what steps have been taken by the Government for early settlement of these claims ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) and (b) A total of 57,493 claims were registered with the Custodian of Enemy Property, Bombay. Out of these, 29,661 claim cases have so far been settled, which include about 20,482 cases where payments have been made; in 20,000 claim cases, the claimants have not filed complete information and, therefore, are lying dormant. About 7832 claim cases that remain are being processed.

(c) To expedite verification of claims, the position is reviewed from time to time and various steps are taken to dispose of pending claims.

Steps taken so far are :

(i) Increase of panel members from 8 to 18.

(ii) Shifting of payment office from Bsmbay to Calcutta.

(iii) Increase of honorarium to panel members.

(iv) Advertisements in Newspapers calling upon claimants to submit documents.

(v) Provision of additional staff etc.

Strength of SC staff in the nationalised banks

984. SHRI ANAND PRAKASH GAUTAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the strength of staff employed in each of the nationalised banks; and